UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
14th meeting
held on
Thursday, 22 October 1992
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SUH (Republic of Korea)
(Vice-Chairman)

later: Mr. ELARABY (Egypt)
(Chairman)

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92-61562 2266V (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/47/PV.14
13 November 1992

ENGLISH

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Suh (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 TO 65, 68 AND 142; AND 67 AND 69 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Mr. TOTH (Hungary): Let me begin by expressing the satisfaction of my delegation at Ambassador Elaraby's election to the chairmanship, and at seeing you, Sir, in the Chair this morning.

If a statistical account were to be made of the proceedings of the First Committee this year, it would probably be an easy task to identify the most often mentioned phrase. Undisputed first place would probably go to the words "chemical weapons". In my statement today, however, I should like to concentrate on a subject that is closely related to that of chemical weapons, namely biological, or bacteriological, weapons.

The relationship is clear. In fact, until 1969 we had been discussing these two issues under a common heading on the multilateral disarmament agenda. The two topics started independent life cycles, however, when in 1972 the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction was concluded. The Convention was a reflection of the political and arms-control realities prevailing at that time: contractual regulation had become feasible, but with less developed provisions on definitions, on the question of non-transfer and on a complaint mechanism, and with no provisions on declarations and verification. Contrary to the alternative chosen for biological weapons, negotiations were continued on the prohibition of chemical weapons, with the more ambitious task of drawing up an all-encompassing agreement.

(Mr. Tóth, Hungary)

At the time the Convention on biological weapons was finalized, biological weapons seemed to be going out of fashion, as they were not considered to be militarily effective. It was a common school of thought too that elements of a future chemical-weapon-prohibition regime could be applicable for the purposes of the Convention on bacteriological weapons. Thus, the political gains of an agreement banning biological weapons had clearly, and justifiably, outweighed the uncertainties arising from the missing elements of the prohibition regime.

For two decades now, there have been lingering questions about whether a convention on chemical weapons could ever be finalized, and whether the biological-weapon ban was an effective one. Today, we can definitely answer the first question: yes, in a short time we are going to have a legal instrument imposing a total ban on one of the most dreadful types of weaponry man has ever invented.

As far as biological weapons are concerned, there have been numerous attempts, especially during the last couple of years, to address through practical measures questions about the effectiveness of the Convention on biological weapons. Those measures represent milestones in an evolutionary process of strengthening the regime of the biological-weapon Convention. The 1986 second Review Conference of States Parties to the biological-weapon Convention strengthened the procedures for consultations in the case of concerns about compliance. In the wake of the 1986 Conference, a set of confidence-building measures was adopted. These measures were aimed at providing more information and creating an atmosphere of openness.

The third Review Conference, in 1991, conducted a thorough analysis of the experience gained, and adopted further confidence-building measures.

(Mr. Tóth, Hungary)

Unfortunately, the confidence-building measures adopted as follow-up to the 1986 Review Conference were poorly implemented. Only 42 States out of the nearly 120 States parties provided declarations in connection with confidence-building measures between 1987 and 1991. The level of participation in the five rounds of data exchange was even lower, around 20 per cent. Notwithstanding the important improvements the 1991 Review Conference brought about in the reporting system, through institutionalizing a declaration form for those with nothing to declare or nothing new to declare, only 35 States have to date provided information under the 1991 confidence-building measures. It is indispensable that the confidence-building measures which, according to the final declaration of the 1991 Conference, are to be implemented be carried out in their entirety by all States parties.

(Mr. Tóth, Hungary)

An important step in the evolutionary process of strengthening the biological-weapons prohibition regime was the joint statement of September 1992 by senior officials of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation. The meeting brought about a timely confirmation of steps taken by the Russian Government to secure the fulfilment of international obligations in the area of biological weapons and to resolve concerns with regard to compliance. The Russian Federation's agreement to allow visits to any non-military biological site in order to remove ambiguities is a concrete manifestation of how compliance concerns might be addressed through cooperative measures. The impact of these measures to be applied might go far beyond the removal of existing concerns as regards compliance, inasmuch as the initial visits to Russian facilities will be followed by comparable visits to facilities in the United States and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the possibility of visits to any military biological facility will be addressed by the three Governments.

Another crucial stage in the gradual process of strengthening the biological weapons Convention was opened when States parties at the Third Review Conference recognized that addressing the issue of establishing a verification system for the Convention in a meaningful way could not be postponed any further. As a first step, an Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts was established and given a precise and detailed mandate. Under this mandate the Group seeks to identify measures that could determine whether a State party to the Convention is engaging in prohibited activities with regard either to agents or to weapons and delivery systems. The main criteria for evaluating these measures are: their ability to provide information, to differentiate between prohibited and non-prohibited activities, and to resolve ambiguities about compliance; their technical, financial, legal and other

(Mr. Tóth, Hungary)

implications; their impact on scientific activities; and their relation to the requirement of confidentiality. The Ad Hoc Group is to complete its task before the end of 1993 and to report to all States parties on its work. It is very important that the report of the Group be based on consensus and that it take into account views expressed during the course of its sessions.

The basic task of the Ad Hoc Group at its first session, which took place from 30 March to 10 April 1992, was to identify and compile a list of potential verification measures by which it might be possible to determine whether a State party was engaging in prohibited activities. Although different stages of the work may not be easily identifiable, simple logic dictates that this phase should be followed by a more detailed description and analysis. The most immediate task now is to build upon the momentum generated by the Ad Hoc Group during the first session and to consider as fully as possible the scientific and technical side of each and every measure identified. Participating States will face all these tasks at the next session of the Group, which is to take place at the end of November this year.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group, I would like to use this opportunity to encourage all States parties to the Convention to participate actively in the work of the Group, which is approaching the most important stages of its activities; it is still not too late to join in and contribute to its deliberations. Naturally, the complex issue of the possible establishment of a verification system requires a broader approach than the one set by the precise mandate of the Ad Hoc Group. Still, the Group's findings will inevitably influence the process and the outcome of further decisions on how to strengthen the regime for the prohibition of biological weapons. This is not simply an intellectual exercise for a few but a real challenge for all of us.

Mr. PENNANEACH (Togo) (interpretation from French): I should like first of all to extend to Mr. Elaraby the congratulations of the Togo delegation on his unanimous election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. His skill and competence displayed in the conduct of our proceedings justify our confidence in him and augur well for the success of our deliberations. We assure him of the wholehearted cooperation of the Togo delegation.

We would also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee, whose assistance will certainly not be lacking.

Last week brought a great deal of suffering both to the Egyptian people and to the Colombian people because of the violent earthquakes which claimed so many victims besides causing such great material damage. The delegation of Togo would like once again to convey to the Egyptian and Colombian peoples its profound condolences and sincere sympathies and it appeals to the international community to render generous assistance to these two afflicted countries.

The work of the First Committee is taking place within an international context marked by the continuation of profound geopolitical changes. East-West antagonism, which for so many decades paralysed the universal Organization, has disappeared once and for all, giving way to cooperation. Thanks to this favourable climate and the positive turn in international relations, many positive developments have occurred in the world over the last twelve months, particularly in the field of disarmament. In this respect, Togo has noted with satisfaction the agreement in principle concluded between President George Bush and President Boris Yeltsin for the reduction and ultimate destruction of stockpiles of strategic nuclear weapons in their respective countries. We also welcome the arrangements undertaken for the

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entry into force of the START Treaty and the recent accession of France and China to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as well as the unilateral moratorium decreed by President Mitterrand banning for one year all nuclear tests by France, following the example of other States. We very much hope that when these moratoriums expire they will be renewed, as they have been in the Russian Federation, and that all nuclear-weapon States will take similar measures so that we can gradually bring about the complete and final cessation of these tests - preferably before 1995, the year for the convening of the Conference of States parties for the revision or extension of the NPT. In order to make the Treaty a genuinely universal instrument, it will be desirable for the States that are not parties to this important juridical instrument, particularly those possessing a potential nuclear capacity, to make the necessary arrangements to accede to it.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

Accession to the Treaty by a great number of States, or even its universality, certainly does not constitute a guarantee that it will work. Strengthening of the safeguards and control system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is therefore indispensable.

Togo attaches particular importance to the creation of and respect for nuclear-weapon-free zones as a contribution to nuclear non- proliferation. We welcome the progress achieved in this area in Latin America, particularly by the recent accession of Argentina, Brazil and Chile to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which will come into force in these countries in the very near future.

As to the African continent, it is important that there be respect for the spirit and letter of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa and that efforts continue to produce and conclude as soon as possible a treaty or convention making Africa a completely nuclear-weapon-free zone. In the realm of chemical or bacteriological disarmament, we would like to welcome particularly the sense of purpose and political will displayed by the Conference on Disarmament at its 1992 session. This sense of purpose and political will enabled it to produce the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the main purpose of which is the total elimination of this type of weapon of mass destruction.

Unswerving in its commitment to accelerating the process of general and complete disarmament, my country attaches great importance to this Convention, the implementation of which will contribute to the strengthening of peace and solidarity among nations. That is why we became one of the sponsors, along with 136 other States, of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1, the adoption of which

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will make it possible to open the Convention for signature by Member States in January 1993 in Paris. The consultations currently under way should make it possible to overcome possible differences so that the draft resolution can be adopted by consensus, which would enhance the likelihood of its unanimous approval.

Another equally important question is that of transparency in the realm of armaments. In the view of the Togo delegation, transparency is one of the best guarantees for the building of confidence among States. From this standpoint we wholeheartedly subscribe to the guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters proposed by the Disarmament Commission in its report on the work of its 1992 session (A/47/42, annex I). This information should make it possible to make more rapid progress towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control. We also welcome the creation of the Register for the monitoring of the international movement of conventional arms. This is an important step towards the final objective. It is imperative, however, that arrangements be made to extend the Register to cover the production and stockpiling of other types of arms, in particular nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the transfer of their technology.

The positive developments that have occurred in the world since the end of the cold war have given grounds for the legitimate hope of seeing the world living in peace in the future. However, we cannot but note the emergence of many local or regional conflicts and the persistent stockpiling of sophisticated arms in various parts of the world, which pose serious threats to regional and international peace and security. In this context particular stress should be laid on the strengthening of the role of the United Nations

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in the area of regional disarmament and the need for closer cooperation between it and regional organizations. This is particularly important, timely and urgent because today we are seeing a disturbing proliferation of conventional weapons in developing countries, particularly in Africa.

The persistence of conflicts in our various regions calls for a search for new ways of strengthening the capacity to act in the area of regional security. Within this context, the United Nations should make better use of regional centres as instruments for the promotion of peace, disarmament and development at the regional level. This means, above all, that these centres should possess the means to act, which unfortunately is not the case today. The situation is even worse with regard particularly to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, which Togo has the honour and privilege of hosting.

We have no intention of going into the history of the Lomé Centre, but nevertheless please permit us to recall that the initiative for its creation was taken by the Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at their twenty-first session at Addis Ababa from 16 to 20 July 1985. By its resolution AHG/Res-138 (XXI), adopted as a result of that meeting, the African leaders, firmly convinced of the interdependence - which now seems to require no further proof - of peace, security, disarmament and development, requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to create a regional office in Africa, the purpose of which would be to undertake in-depth studies and to promote the aforementioned objectives.

Following this request, the General Assembly, in resolution 40/151 G, adopted on 16 December 1985, decided to create this Centre on 1 January 1986 on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

Inaugurated on 24 October 1986, the anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, the Centre has since that time undertaken many activities within its mandate. However, over the last three years it has been confronted by serious difficulties due essentially to an acknowledged lack of funds. This shortage of funds has had the particular effect of impeding the working of the centre, halting its momentum and preventing the implementation of its programme of activities.

The many local open or latent conflicts raging over the African continent highlight the usefulness of the Lomé Centre, whose work is indispensable for the maintenance of peace and security, at least in terms of their military aspects.

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

While grateful to the donor countries that have supported the Centre's work since its establishment - a list of these countries appears in the Secretary-General's report on the regional centres - Togo appeals urgently to all other Member States that have not done so to contemplate making voluntary contributions to the Centre. The Secretary-General's report on the regional centres is clear testimony to his tireless efforts to enable them to discharge all their responsibilities. The Togo delegation is grateful to him for this and requests him to concert his efforts with those of the Office for Disarmament Affairs with a view to making available to the Lomé Centre and other regional centres the necessary funds to ensure their financial viability, in accordance with the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/37 F. The Togo delegation therefore hopes that the draft resolution shortly to be submitted jointly by the regional groups concerned will be adopted by consensus.

Military deterrence does not guarantee peace or security. Many non-military factors are just as threatening to nations and peoples as armed conflicts. The widespread economic crisis and the consequent worsening of the social situation and standards of living of the peoples in the developing countries, particularly in the least advanced among them, are all factors to be taken into account in the quest for true peace and security.

In the foreword of a general policy study carried out by the World Bank, entitled "Poverty and Hunger", we read the following:

> "The world has more than enough to feed itself. The growth of world food production has been faster than the unprecedented population growth over the past 40 years. But many poor countries and hundreds of millions of poor people derive nothing from this abundance. They do not have food security because their purchasing power is too low".

(Mr. Pennaneach, Togo)

Indeed, poverty, hunger, famine, disease, destitution and unemployment are all scourges currently afflicting the developing societies, decimating populations as effectively as war. There are many in the developing world who are unable to sate their hunger or slake their thirst; they live in total privation in a practically chronic state of undernourishment and physical and moral debility. In the view of the Togo delegation, these scourges are a dangerous threat to international peace and security.

The eradication of poverty in all its forms is a basic prerequisite in the quest for true peace and security. This means that mankind's fundamental needs must be fully satisfied. It also presupposes the establishment in our societies of truly democratic political systems based on justice, equity and respect for human rights. Taking up the idea expressed by the Secretary-General in his statement on World Habitat Day, the Togo delegation believes that a man without hearth, home or employment is liable to become a man without faith or law, a true danger to peace and security.

Thus, the non-military aspects of peace and security deserve our greater attention and should be tackled from a new angle. In this regard, the United Nations and the international community as a whole should step up the fight against all these evils on the basis of sound, equitable and mutually beneficial cooperation.

The end of the cold war, the winds of freedom and democracy that have been blowing for some time now have opened up new prospects for strengthening solidarity between nations and confidence between States, which can help accelerate the disarmament process and promote the establishment of a new world order whose keystone will be cooperation and respect for human rights. It must be noted that in his important report "An Agenda for Peace" the

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Secretary-General appealed in particular for the cooperation of the United Nations, States and non-governmental organizations in achieving the noble goals of the San Francisco Charter.

Mutually profitable solidarity and cooperation will banish forever all the policies of domination and hegemony. New prospects have therefore opened up for the international community on the threshold of the third millenium to build a better world, free from poverty and the spectre of war. In this new impulse towards solidarity, the United Nations must be a leader in our concerted action to establish and maintain peace and security, the three pillars of which are, in our view, complete and general disarmament, preventive diplomacy and economic and social development.

Mr. DEMBINSKI (Poland): The United Nations has always played an active role in the efforts to ban chemical weapons. The First Committee repeatedly, year after year, has addressed this issue - sometimes with hope, but more often than not with regret and growing impatience that despite all the efforts and the long history of negotiations, the world community had not been able to get rid of these weapons of mass destruction - the goal to which Poland is firmly committed.

Therefore, I am particularly pleased that this year's report of the Conference on Disarmament contains the final text of the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, thus bringing this long process of negotiation to a successful completion. As rightly indicated in the draft resolution before us, the draft Convention is indeed an unprecedented global, comprehensive and verifiable multilateral disarmament agreement.

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

The process of negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention was one of the most difficult and complex in the history of disarmament negotiations. This is particularly true in regard to the last stage of the process. We were faced with different approaches to some of the key issues of the Convention, the challenge inspection and the scope of verification being the most striking examples. The final compromise reached in the negotiations and embodied in the draft Convention submitted to the General Assembly fully deserves commendation. We are firmly convinced that the process leading to this compromise was comprehensive, transparent and fair. May I take this opportunity to pay a tribute to this year's Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, assisted by his diligent, capable and dedicated team, whose unrelenting efforts greatly contributed to the final result. I should like also to pay a tribute to his predecessors in the Chair and to all delegations that actively participated in the negotiations. Indeed, the text of the Convention is the result of the collective efforts of all involved.

The compromise is the result of mutual concessions and accommodation. Poland favoured a stringent and more intrusive verification regime, convinced that it could better serve our security interests. On this point, not everything in the text meets our expectations. We made concessions in order to reach a solution acceptable to other participants. Now, we are proud of the Convention and we look forward to its signing.

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

The chemical-weapons Convention is a truly historic achievement in disarmament. It prohibits, and will eventually totally abolish that entire category of weapons of mass destruction. Its implementation will be subject to a strict and effective verification system. It includes challenge inspection, an entirely new instrument belonging to a new generation of verification measures. The verification requirements are reasonably balanced in respect of the need to protect confidential information not relevant to the object of the Convention.

The Convention's provisions have been formulated in such a manner as to avoid hampering the economic and technological development of States parties. They provide for effective international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited by the Convention. The Convention constitutes an effective instrument for combating the proliferation of chemical weapons. It contains specific provisions to protect States parties against chemical weapons and to provide assistance when needed, and it establishes sanctions to deal with situations where the Convention has not been complied with.

However, the adoption of the Convention is not an end in itself; it is an important first step towards a chemical-weapon-free world. We must not allow ourselves to rest in self-satisfaction. There are even more ambitious and complicated tasks ahead, tasks of translating the Convention's language into practice and smoothing the path for its implementation. The first task is to ensure that the Convention is signed by the largest possible number of States. In this respect, Poland welcomes the invitation extended by the President of France to attend the signing ceremony of the Convention in Paris at the beginning of 1993, and reaffirms its commitment to be one of the original signatories.

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

As a country which, together with Canada, has been submitting draft resolutions on chemical weapons for many years now, Poland is particularly pleased to note the broad support for draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1. It augurs well for the universality of this disarmament instrument. For the same reason, we are convinced that it would be appropriate to adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

The next task is to ensure that there is effective and thorough preparation for the early entry into force of the Convention. We are convinced that this is in our common interest and will greatly contribute to the enhancement of international peace and security. We have to bear in mind the rather high threshold for the number of ratifications required for the Convention to enter into force. We should therefore follow the ratification process closely, as it would be ironic if, following the success of the negotiations, the entry into force of this important instrument were to be unduly delayed.

A number of important tasks have also been transmitted to the preparatory commission responsible for ensuring that the Convention is implemented in an orderly manner. We are in favour of an early start to the commission's work to avoid losing the present momentum. The successful accomplishment of the tasks of the preparatory commission would be greatly facilitated by cooperation on the part of the signatory States by making advance declarations with a view to determining verification requirements. The voluntary provision of such data in the format established by the Convention would serve as a confidence-building measure and as practical confirmation of the readiness of States to become parties to the Convention.

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

We welcome the selection of the Hague as the seat of the future organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons. The organization will need to have a highly qualified staff; for that reason, it is important to establish, from the very beginning of the preparatory commission's activities, special training programmes for future inspectors and to coordinate the existing programmes offered by certain countries.

The preparatory period should also be used to settle some remaining bilateral issues, such as abandoned chemical weapons. We are of the opinion that the satisfactory resolution of these issues prior to the entry into force of the Convention would serve as a good example of how to promote the early achievement of the Convention's goals.

The rich experience accumulated during the long years of negotiations on chemical weapons, especially in regard to the verification regime, should be analysed and compared with other disarmament agreements. This does not mean that we consider this regime to be a ready-made model to be emulated without taking into account the specific requirements of different disarmament agreements. However, its relevance - for example, to the ongoing work of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts to Identify and Examine Potential Verification Measures for the Biological Weapons Convention - can hardly be overestimated.

The successful completion of the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention has considerably increased the credibility of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating body. This credibility, however, should not be taken for granted. It will depend to a large extent on the Conference's ability to adapt itself to the dramatically changed international environment and to respond to the newly emerging tasks and challenges.

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

We should review the role of the Conference, its agenda and membership. Such a review should be neither hasty nor divorced from the overall review of the United Nations disarmament machinery as a whole, including the First Committee and the United Nations Disarmament Commission. It should result in a precise allocation of tasks and responsibilities among those bodies to render them complementary and to eliminate overlapping.

In our opinion, the Conference on Disarmament should remain the multilateral disarmament body responsible for negotiating specific disarmament agreements. The necessary extension of its membership should not adversely affect its effectiveness as a negotiating forum. A decision on this question should be reached without undue delay. At the same time, it is important to improve the mechanisms for participation by non-member States in the negotiations.

The intensity of the negotiations on the chemical-weapons Convention, for years a priority task of the Conference, accounts for the modest achievements of its other subsidiary bodies, but even now there is little chance of making real progress on most of the agenda items inherited from the cold-war period. The old approach, based on the East-West confrontation, is no longer valid. The agenda of the Conference needs to reflect the post-cold-war era.

Our delegation is in favour of re-examining the agenda. In our view, a revised agenda should contain a limited number of items and should clearly indicate its priorities. If, for some reason, radical changes in the agenda prove not to be possible, we shall still favour a course of action whereby each session would have clearly identified priority items on its agenda, resulting in a more focused and structured approach and avoiding the dissipation of effort. It is of special importance to keep in mind the small size of the overwhelming majority of delegations.

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

It is clear from the debate in the Conference that at least two items stand out as priorities: the issues of a nuclear-test ban and transparency in armaments. We share this view. We hope that the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear-Test Ban will be re-established at the beginning of the 1993 session. The significant progress in nuclear disarmament - the recent joint United States-Russian understanding on deep cuts in their respective strategic nuclear arsenals by the year 2003, going beyond the reductions foreseen in the START Treaty; the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime as a result of the accession by China and France to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); and, last but not least, the moratorium on testing by France, Russia and the United States - should have a positive impact on the efforts to negotiate a nuclear-test ban.

In this regard, we should like to express our appreciation of the commendable work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, and of the results and experience obtained in GSETT-2.

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

We are pleased with the results of the work of the Conference on a new agenda item entitled "Transparency in armaments", to which Poland attaches major importance. We see great potential in this area for enhancing confidence, reducing misperceptions of military capabilities and intentions and maintaining predictability in military activities. Despite the limited number of meetings and the preliminary character of the discussions, it is evident that this agenda item is one of the most promising.

This year the approach, a reasonable one, was to prepare as exhaustive an inventory of relevant topics and problems as possible and to collect ideas submitted by delegations with regard to openness and transparency, and this task has been successfully accomplished. The inventory contained in the report of the Conference on Disarmament provides a useful basis for further work by the Conference. We should try next year to reach an agreement on a more structured discussion in the appropriate organizational framework of an ad hoc committee. Specific recommendations to the Conference contained in General Assembly resolution 46/36 L and the results of the work of the Panel of Governmental Technical Experts under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Hendrik Wagenmakers, contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the Register of Conventional Arms (A/47/342 and Corr.1), lead in the right direction. Poland welcomes the report with appreciation. We should also find a way to address, under this agenda item, the whole complex of non-proliferation issues and the eventual role the Conference could play in this regard without detracting from the efforts of other forums.

The concerted efforts of the Conference on a limited number of items could produce better and more visible results. Moreover, it would allow for greater flexibility in taking up other issues whenever progress is really

(Mr. Dembinski, Poland)

achievable. We are convinced that the ongoing consultations of Ambassador Michel Servais, President of the Conference, will yield positive results concerning the crucial issues of the agenda, the organization of work and the membership of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. KHOUINI (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset, Mr. Chairman, to extend to you the warm congratulations of my delegation on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Your personal qualities, rich diplomatic experience and your contributions to the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the annual meetings of the Disarmament Commission assure us of outstanding guidance and great success in our deliberations.

May I also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his interest in and support of our work and our gratitude to Mr. Sohrab Kheradi and all the members of his staff for all the assistance they provide to my delegation.

Our thanks also go to Mr. Robert Mroziewicz for the skill he displayed throughout our deliberations at the forty-sixth session.

I must also express our appreciation to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, who for several sessions has worked alongside us. We convey to him our best wishes of success in his new peace mission in Cambodia.

(spoke in French)

The end of the cold war and other positive world developments have shed a completely new light on disarmament in its various aspects and components. Indeed, thanks to the new configuration of international politics, arms control and disarmament no longer have as their main goal the maintenance of a

(Mr. Khouini, Tunisia)

balance of forces between two military alliances, a situation that conditioned international affairs for 40 years. Rather, they are now seen more and more as the constitutive elements of a programme of action for international security in the framework of which problems should be approached from the point of view of preventive diplomacy and the quest and maintenance of peace.

As a peaceful country par excellence, Tunisia considers that the pursuit of peace and security is now everyone's concern and is no longer the province of one or several States. Accordingly, we support all initiatives aimed at applying realistic and non-discriminatory global strategies with a view to further arms reductions, leading without delay to general and complete disramament. This position is completely consonant with my country's policy in the sphere of disarmament and arms limitation. Tunisia is therefore a party to all treaties and conventions in the sphere of disarmament.

The choices shared by Tunisia go hand in hand with its resolve to participate in the general effort to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, an effort which at the end of this century has become one of the great priorities of the international community, as was recalled by the Security Council at its Summit Meeting on 31 January 1992.

Along the same lines, we also subscribe to the notion that today we must devote ourselves to defining and embracing the necessary conditions for global security by means of duly negotiated agreements between all countries on an equal footing. This endeavour, undertaken in a spirit of true responsibility, would enable us to lay solid foundations on which to build world security, to which we all aspire. In addition to its military components, world security also involves economic, social, developmental and environmental aspects.

(Mr. Khouini, Tunisia)

It is inarguably true that in recent years we have witnessed important achievements in nuclear, conventional and chemical disarmament. My delegation was especially pleased at the initiatives taken in the sphere of nuclear disarmament by the accession of new States to the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), namely, France, China, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. These new accessions will bring the number of States parties to the Treaty to more than 150, thus adding to the credibility of the Treaty and enabling us to renew it at the Review Conference scheduled for 1995.

Now that the nuclear Powers and permanent members of the Security Council have become parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, my delegation reiterates its call for the disarmament process to become a real objective and no longer a subject for unilateral measures, laudable though they may be, but rather of an international convention.

(Mr. Khouini, Tunisia)

In the same context, we believe that it is high time to honour the commitments undertaken by the nuclear States, in particular to proceed with sustained negotiations towards the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Unilateral moratoriums in the area of nuclear testing should be translated into multilateral commitments and should apply to all nuclear-weapon States. My delegation welcomed with satisfaction the consultations conducted by the President of the Conference of States parties to the Treaty, Mr. Ali Alatas, Minister for Foreign affairs of Indonesia, with a view to achieving a comprehensive agreement on the prohibition of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and underwater as soon as possible.

Tunisia believes that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) should be extended indefinitely, and that the Review Conference of 1995 should, inter alia, address the universalization of the Treaty. It should provide for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the transformation of the Treaty into a convention prohibiting the production, stockpiling and transfer of nuclear weapons.

Likewise, in this connection we hold the view that it is equally important for States that have voluntarily renounced the nuclear option, as my country has, to benefit from an international juridical instrument providing a guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and providing access to nuclear technology for civilian and development purposes.

The only principle that should prevail in this context is that of collective security, because the doctrine of nuclear deterrence conceived against the background of the cold war, which ultimately implies a readiness to use nuclear weapons, can only be opposed to the principles of the NPT and

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is therefore far from constituting a sound basis for preventing the triggering of a nuclear war.

Today we are even more concerned by another aspect, namely the risk of seeing some nuclear arsenals slip out of any control, a risk that is redoubled by the cross-border traffic in fissile material and in enriched uranium. This deserves the attention of everyone so that we can respond vigorously to this trend, which threatens all States equally.

My delegation therefore reiterates the appeal of the General Assembly in resolution 46/37 D, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons", in which the Conference on Disarmament is requested to commence negotiations, as a matter of priority, in order to reach agreement on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, we support the idea of expanding the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, and we reiterate Tunisia's request to be a member of the Conference so that it can make an added contribution to its work and achievements.

With respect to chemical weapons - which we consider to be weapons of mass destruction similarly to nuclear, bacteriological and even conventional weapons - my country has always called for their prohibition in order to protect humankind from their harmful effects.

Since negotiations began at the Conference on Disarmament on the drafting of a Convention on chemical weapons, Tunisia, which has made contributions in this area since the Paris Conference, where it played an active role, reiterates here its commitment, side by side with the international community, forever to banish this type of weapon. We have no doubt that all States wish

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to have an effective mechanism for ensuring the destruction of existing chemical arsenals and for preventing those who are presently proliferating chemical weapons from replenishing their arsenals.

We believe, however, that there is a link between all elements relating to security, in the sense that both chemical and nuclear weapons, and even conventional arms, in the perspective of an arms race, tend to generate political tensions, and therefore constitute a major obstacle to the introduction of a climate of trust in international relations and hamper the advent of the genuine peace to which we all aspire.

We agree that this three-dimensional relationship is complex. However, we must work simultaneously on all the various aspects of this question, because it will not be possible to settle any one of these elements if we are not sure that we are also making progress on the others. We must effect a radical change in military and political situations as a whole in order to achieve general and complete disarmament in all areas.

It has not been possible to establish confidence-building measures in the Middle East in order to introduce a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The necessary conditions for establishing a climate of confidence in this very sensitive part of the world would be to place all the nuclear facilities under the control and the safeguards guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to provide incentives for those who possess nuclear weapons to irreversibly and definitely abandon their policy of nuclear deterrence.

It is inconceivable that the international community could devote its attention to developing international treaties and conventions in the sphere of disarmament and security and that some parties might then disregard them and deliberately act contrary to the principles of non-proliferation to which we have all subscribed.

(Mr. Khouini, Tunisia)

Therefore, in order to lend credibility to an international effort aimed at prohibiting the use of chemical, bacteriological and nuclear weapons, it falls to the international community to exert the same pressures, in a non-selective way, upon all recalcitrant parties and States that engage in proliferation. At stake is the credibility of our goals and the future of this world, which we wish to rid of all types of weapons of mass destruction.

My country, which has chosen the approach of peaceful settlement of disputes of all kinds, will continue to work for peace and remain irreversibly committed to the path of non-proliferation and in particular with respect to weapons of mass destruction, both chemical and nuclear.

We have taken due note of the report of the Secretary-General concerning the drawing up of a Register of Conventional Arms. We remain convinced that, if rigorous control in this area were to be introduced under United Nations auspices, it should be universal and non-discriminatory and encompass the activities of production and export of weapons. The arms race is as objectionable when fuelled by imports as it is when fuelled by local production or facilitated by the transfer of weapons technology.

We wish to emphasize in this respect the disturbing aspect of the illicit transfer of weapons. The clandestine nature of this activity, in my delegation's view, is of obvious seriousness to the internal order of States and consequently to regional and international security.*

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* The Chairman took the Chair.

(Mr. Khouini, Tunisia)

The substantial resources invested in the production and accumulation of increasingly refined weapons could be better used if earmarked for more noble causes. We are today witnessing a worsening of the underdevelopment of many countries of the third world. Entire populations are being dessimated by famine and disease.

The international community cannot remain indifferent to such a deteriorating situation. In the name of international solidarity and the noble principles enshrined in the Charter, it must, without delay, find an effective and speedy solution to this situation.

We hope thus to see the vast resources devoted to the development and accumulation of weapons reoriented towards peaceful goals, development in particular. It is paradoxical to see countries engaged in unbridled military expenditures in a world where millions of human beings are victims of appalling poverty. The 1992 human development report shows that a simple reduction of 3 per cent of military expenditures by all countries would lead to a dividend of some $1.5 trillion in favour of peace.

International peace and security are an indivisible whole and the international community should today equally and decisively devote itself to implementing measures of collective security as set forth in the Charter. Indeed, although the bipolar structure of our world is a thing of the past and a spirit of understanding is becoming more prominent among nations, there remain some conflicts and hotbeds of tension that require all of us to make a more sustained effort. The lack of a just and comprehensive solution to the problem of the Palestinian people could compromise hopes of seeing the Middle East benefit from this new era of détente in international relations. We appeal to the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran to settle

(Mr. Khouini, Tunisia)

the conflict regarding the emirate islands within the framework of principles of good-neighbourliness and based on the Memoranda and Treaties signed by these two brotherly countries, so that the Gulf area may not again be plunged into tension and uncertainty.

If today it is accepted that the general trend in international relations is to encourage equal security for all States, it has also been clearly shown that international security includes other aspects than those related directly to weapons and disarmament. Thus the improvement of relations between the great Powers has opened up positive prospects for the settlement of all conflicts and hotbeds of tension in the world by favouring the advent of a new world order that will replace decades of confrontation with an era of cooperation and harmony among nations.

In this context, Tunisia, devoting its efforts to the maintenance of peace and peacemaking in Africa, Europe and Asia under the aegis of the United Nations, is working in concert with the other coastal countries of the Mediterranean to make the Mediterranean basin a zone of peace, harmony and cooperation thereby laying the foundations of a new form of Euro-Maghreb relations. It is firmly pursuing those efforts in the framework of the "Five plus Five" dialogue, with the prospect of introducing a model of North-South cooperation.

We shall have a better world when military and non-military threats are replaced by mutually advantageous cooperation and security for all. The objectives of the Charter can still be realized, given the sincere commitment of everyone.

Mr. AZIKIWE (Nigeria): My delegation has asked to speak for the second time in order to take up the issue of international peace and security.

The United Nations was established almost half a century ago, following a period of war. Hence its rightful preoccupation with international peace and security. Article 1 (1) of the Charter states that one of the purposes of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security by the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and the settlement of disputes.

In the 48 years of its existence, the United Nations has tried to fulfil the purposes for which it was founded. The Organization has served as a forum for the discussion of international security issues and has striven to mediate in conflict situations when called upon to do so by Member States. However, the effectiveness of the Organization was limited in the past because of the cold war which paralysed the Security Council, the main organ with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

With the end of East-West rivalry, the United Nations should devote itself towards fulfilling the vision of its founders. That is why the Secretary-General's proposals contained in "An Agenda for Peace" are timely. The suggestions elaborate on informal United Nations mechanisms for conflict prevention, such as preventive diplomacy and conflict management. Other concepts, such as peace-building, present fresh perspectives on ways to ensure that this post-cold war period has in place mechanisms not only to prevent conflicts but also to build and sustain peace.

We note with satisfaction that the Secretary-General's proposals also contain other important elements which hitherto had been relegated to the back burner. One such element is the role of regional organizations in conflict

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

prevention and the maintenance of peace. Although Chapter VIII of the Charter recognizes regional arrangements, this provision has not enjoyed prominence and regional organizations have not been used effectively in the maintenance of peace despite certain manifest advantages such as familiarity with the area of conflict. While recognizing that not all conflicts can benefit from the regional arrangements stated in the Charter, none the less, those regional organizations that have undertaken or are undertaking peace-maintenance roles, in accordance with the Charter, should be encouraged and assisted with resources.

One element in the maintenance of international peace and security is the control of armaments. That is why we consider that "An Agenda for Peace" should be enriched further with a discussion of the important role that disarmament could play in fostering peace and security.

Appropriately, the global community has long been preoccupied with military threats to peace and security. However, there are other threats to peace and security which, though less dramatic than the accumulation of arms, are equally important. Poverty, social deprivation, environmental degradation and underdevelopment can also lead to social turmoil with consequences for the security of a State and its neighbours. An immediate consequence could be mass migration that could severely tax the social and security services of asylum States. The Nigerian delegation believes that the international community must work assiduously to address the social and economic factors that impede the realization of the purposes and principles so well espoused in the Charter.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

The widening economic gap between the affluent North and the impoverished South could also pose a threat to international peace and security. The Nigeria delegation believes that the international community must urgently address all these non-military issues, which are of direct relevance to peace and security within and among States. There is a most auspicious political climate now for promoting agreement on ploughing resources saved from disarmament into assistance to poor countries in their developmental efforts. The way to international peace and security is not only through the absence of war but through meeting the basic human needs of all peoples and States.

Mr. REFAQAT (Pakistan): This session of the First Committee is taking place at a time when the world is undergoing momentous changes that present us with both a sense of optimism and a cause for grave concern. It is, therefore, all the more fortunate that for this crucial session, Sir, we have someone with your vast experience and diplomatic skills as Chairman of our Committee. We are confident that under your wise and able leadership the deliberations of the Committee will be fruitful and lead to concrete and far-reaching results.

I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to convey our deep appreciation to Mr. Robert Mroziewicz for the skill and dedication with which he presided over our Committee last year.

The international political horizon appears to have brightened over the past few years. The world has moved from the shackles of the cold war into a new era that is marked by some positive and brighter developments. It is an era that has presented us with new opportunities to strengthen international and regional peace, security and stability through disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and confidence-building measures, even though we face many old, and some new, problems at both regional and global levels.

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

The importance of disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and confidence-building for the maintenance of international and regional peace and security cannot be overemphasized. Foremost in this regard is the objective of a comprehensive programme of disarmament at the global and regional levels. Pakistan has welcomed the agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation, which will result in drastically reducing their strategic nuclear arsenals. These far-reaching agreements have had a highly salutary effect on the overall international-security environment. Yet in the prevailing unsettled conditions there is a pressing need for further reductions leading to the eventual complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The atmosphere is conducive to this, and the goals are no longer seen as unattainable.

Pending the achievement of global nuclear disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States are under an obligation to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In our view, security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States should be without qualification, not subject to divergent or far-fetched interpretations and unlimited in scope, application and duration. In the propitious climate that prevails today, with the end of the cold war, there can be no reason why such assurances cannot be extended to the non-nuclear-weapon States unconditionally and in a legally binding manner. My delegation will be submitting a draft resolution again this year, and we look forward to concrete subsequent progress in the Conference on Disarmament on this particular issue.

An imperative and vital objective of nuclear disarmament is the acceptance by all States of a permanent ban on nuclear-weapon testing in all environments and for all times. Pakistan has lent its full support to the

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

initiative to convert the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Meanwhile, it is our view that the conclusion of nuclear-test-ban agreements among regional States in various parts of the world would not only act as a major confidence-building measure but also facilitate the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Global and regional approaches to disarmament complement each other and should be pursued simultaneously to promote regional and international peace and security. The Declaration issued at the conclusion of the tenth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Jakarta in September this year, commends the regional approach in these words:

> "The Heads of State or Government recognized that security problems are region-specific and are best addressed within an appropriate regional context."

For a large number of States, perceived threats to their security and the need for military preparedness are primarily connected with the conditions obtaining in their own regions. Threat perceptions and security concerns, in certain regards, vary from region to region. A regional approach thus offers the most realistic way to register meaningful progress towards disarmament. My delegation is pleased to note that this approach is steadily gaining ground, as evidenced by the overwhelming support for General Assembly resolution 46/36 I, on regional disarmament, which was submitted by Pakistan at the Assembly's forty-sixth session. That resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority last year, and we hope that the one submitted this year on the same subject will get even wider support, and that it will pave the way towards concrete action in this particular field.

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

Pakistan believes that a process of regional arms control could envisage the following: steps to build mutual trust and confidence; efforts to resolve outstanding disputes and to clear up misunderstandings; endeavours to establish a mutually acceptable military equilibrium between the regional States, which could be achieved, inter alia, through renunciation of certain types of advanced weapons, agreed ceilings on conventional forces and the creation of fully or partially demilitarized zones on land, sea and in the air; and establishment of mechanisms that could facilitate disarmament and security initiatives and develop new approaches to be discussed and formulate concrete steps to be undertaken.

Pakistan remains committed to the objective of nuclear non-proliferation measures, which we believe can gain universal credibility and acceptance if their scope and applications are comprehensive and non-discriminatory. That precondition applies as much to nuclear non-proliferation as it does to the endeavours to control the spread of medium- and long-range missiles.

In view of the renewed attention that is currently being focused on the dangers of nuclear proliferation, we should like to reiterate once again our willingness to accept any equitable and non-discriminatory regime to help in keeping South Asia free of nuclear weapons. Pakistan has, over the years, made a number of proposals aimed at the attainment of this objective, including the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. This proposal has been repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly since 1974 and is steadily gaining support, as was evidenced at the forty-sixth session. We will submit our draft resolution on this subject again this year and hope that it will receive the endorsement of an overwhelming majority, leading to complete unanimity on this particular matter.

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

In June 1991 the Prime Minister of Pakistan proposed the convening of five-nation consultations between the United States, the Russian Federation and China, on the one hand, and India and Pakistan, on the other, to ensure nuclear non-proliferation in the South Asian region. The Prime Minister also proposed to India bilateral or regional arrangements for the total prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction in South Asia and for mutual and balanced reduction of forces consistent with the principle of equal and undiminished security at the lowest level of armament. We are encouraged by the positive response to those proposals by many countries of the world. We hope that India will also respond positively, particularly to the proposal for five-nation consultations for a nuclear non-proliferation regime in South Asia.

Our proposals reflect our genuine desire that the South Asian countries should concentrate their efforts on economic development through the diversion of resources currently allocated to armaments, in order to confront the non-military threats of underdevelopment, poverty, food scarcity, resource depletion and severe environmental degradation.

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

Pakistan remains convinced of the utility and importance of confidence-building measures for defusing tensions, promoting arms control and disarmament, strengthening regional and international peace and security, resolving outstanding disputes and developing mutually beneficial and friendly relations between States.

In the South Asian context, Pakistan has been working to promote a climate of peace and stability through the adoption of confidence-building measures and the peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes. In August this year, in pursuance of these efforts, Pakistan signed with India a joint Declaration on the complete prohibition of the development, production, acquisition or use of chemical weapons. We have also exchanged with India the instruments of ratification pertaining to the agreements on advance notification of military exercises, manoeuvres and troop movements and on the prevention of air-space violations. Pursuant to an agreement between Pakistan and India not to attack each other's nuclear facilities, we exchanged lists of these nuclear facilities with India on 1 January 1992.

Pakistan fully adheres to the objectives of the draft Convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which has been transmitted to the General Assembly by the Conference on Disarmament. We completely share the resolve of the international community to banish for ever these horrendous instruments of warfare. However, the draft Convention contains some provisions which cause us concern. It remains our hope that these shortcomings will be redressed to ensure universal adherence to this important document.

Pakistan fully supports the concept of transparency in armaments, so long as this simultaneously and comprehensively takes into account all its related and integrally linked aspects and helps in enhancing confidence among States,

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particularly at the regional level, with the ultimate objective of ensuring the equal and undiminished security of States at the lowest level of armaments.

The accumulation of armaments in various regions of the world is the result of a number of factors: unresolved territorial disputes, denial of the right of self-determination, ambitions for regional hegemony by States that are militarily more significant, and foreign occupation and military intervention.

One of the most important issues to be addressed by the international community is, therefore, the peaceful resolution of outstanding conflicts and disputes. Only thus can proposals for transparency in armaments succeed in their essential objective, and the process of regional and international peace and security be strengthened. Transparency is not an end in itself.

Arms-control measures which are partial, which address only selected aspects of what is essentially an issue with many aspects, or which are discriminatory in nature or unbalanced in the treatment of different elements, cannot be implemented successfully. This is particularly true of measures that focus on transparency in international arms transfers, while relegating to a different plane of relative indifference equally important issues such as the indigenous arms-production capabilities of States, existing stockpiles of weapons or the transfer of armaments technology.

Many small and medium-sized States, lacking indigenous defence-production capabilities, have no choice but to depend upon the international transfer of arms to meet their essential security requirements. In some cases, they perceive threats to their security emanating from States with large indigenous defence-production capabilities. We sincerely hope that efforts will continue

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to ensure that the scope of the arms-transfer Register is expanded to include all these widely shared concerns.

The wide disparity between the armaments expenditures of militarily strong States and other States cannot be justified. Reductions in military budgets, therefore, should be initiated by those States which possess large military arsenals and capabilities. In efforts to reduce military expenditures, due consideration must be given to the security concerns of small and vulnerable States.

Recently, at the tenth non-aligned Summit in Jakarta, the Prime Minister of Pakistan proposed that the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean should meet to deliberate upon the conditions prevailing in the Indian Ocean region and to agree upon measures to preserve and promote regional peace and stability. Such a conference would, in our view, complement the efforts being made within the framework of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean to establish a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region. We hope it will be possible to hold the proposed conference of littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean in the near future.

The deployment of weapons based in space and directed against objects in space or on Earth is a matter of serious concern. The increasing danger of military uses of outer space as a result of scientific and technological advance leads us to believe that the existing legal regime imposing some restrictions on the military uses of outer space is not enough to prevent an arms race in outer space. It is important to strengthen the existing legal norms and to supplement them with new rules, so that outer space is reserved only for peaceful purposes. In this context, greater transparency in the activities of the space Powers would serve as an important confidence-building measure.

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

The use of space-based remote-sensing and surveillance techniques today offers a unique opportunity for monitoring disarmament agreements. This capability has remained in the exclusive possession of a few technologically advanced States. We believe that these techniques should be made available to all countries on an equal and non-discriminatory basis through an appropriate international institution.

In our view, the United Nations is the ideal forum for discussing and thrashing out disarmament and security-building measures. It can also act as a catalyst in the realm of regional disarmament by encouraging individual States through its advisory role.

The dawn of a new era has provided us with new opportunities to build a strong edifice for the maintenance of international peace and security. While the collapse of the bipolar system will not in itself ensure just and durable international peace, it has nevertheless opened up new vistas for building a new international order which is just, equitable, progressive and based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly the principles of sovereign equality, non-interference and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The end of the cold war has greatly improved the prospects for disarmament, non-proliferation and confidence building, which must be pursued on a non-discriminatory basis. The resources released from disarmament should be devoted to the acceleration of economic growth and the overall development of developing countries.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.